



RFCI

March 2014

TAMPA BAY CHAPTER of the
RARE FRUIT COUNCIL INTERNATIONAL,
INC.

<http://www.rarefruit.org>

TampaBayRFCI@tampabay.rr.com

<http://www.facebook.com/TampaBayChapterRareFruitCouncilIntlInc>

Meetings are held the second Sunday, 2:00 P.M.
at the Tampa Garden Club, 2629 Bayshore Blvd.

∞ Upcoming Programs and Events ∞

March: Larry M. Schokman, Director Emeritus for the Kampong, of the National Tropical Botanical Garden will be speaking on the fruits of the Kampong. Larry has written a book on the plants and fruits of the Kampong, which he will have available for purchase at the meeting at COST to members \$37.45 (including tax), a huge savings over the retail price for this beautiful, hardcover book. He will also autograph the books for you. **So remember to bring money for the amount of copies of this book that you want to buy.**



April: No regular Club meeting. See you at the USF Plant Festival!

April 12 - 13: USF Botanical Garden Spring Plant Festival.

We will need club members to help with this event. It is an important fundraiser for the club. Members are invited to attend, help with set up on Friday, to assist in the sale on Saturday and Sunday, to donate or sell fruiting plants, to enjoy the camaraderie and to visit other exhibits.



If you plan to sell plants, please note that members cannot sell citrus, non-fruiting plants or herbs. Members selling plants must submit a manifest listing their plants and prices. Plants must have a label with the name of the plant, the price and the seller's initials.

If you have questions: Jimmy & Sally Lee (813) 982-9359.
USF Botanical Garden website: <http://gardens.usf.edu/>

President: Thom Scott; Editor: Denise Provencher; Photographs: Fred Engelbrecht
Membership: Bryon Provencher; Production/Distribution: Denise Provencher

∞ A President's Gratitude ∞

I am pleased to announce the successful completion of our two most important affairs of the year, the Citrus Celebration, and the Plant Club Competition. These events held at the Florida State Fair afford us an unexcelled venue for fulfilling our chartered mission of promoting backyard edible horticulture. Such endeavors demand the active involvement of many of our Club members, the list of whom is regrettably too long to present here. Among the diverse services they performed were: fruit donors, pickers, washers, cutters, and coordinators: display (plant and fruit) donors, workers and educators; the chefs who fed us; and all those that generously gave up their time and/or materials. There are however, several individuals who, I believe deserve special recognition for their unparalleled efforts: Bill and Liz Vega, Jim and Sally Lee, Paul and Mary Ann Baransky, Charles and Linda Novak, Gerry Amyot, George Campani, Roberta Harris, Fred Engelbrecht, Ron Shigemura, and Shige Sawada. Regrettably, brevity prevents me from naming the many other significant benefactors. Finally, I wish to extend our heartfelt appreciation to all of you who aided us throughout the year: club officers and directors, Denise Provencher - newsletter editor, Bryon Provencher - membership and seed exchange; Paul Zmoda - "What's Happening"; Andrew Hendrickson - website; Bill and Liz Vega - meeting setup and breakdown; plant raffle and seed exchange donors; tasting table contributors; and all the good souls that show up early, stay late and work hard to make this club prosper and flourish.

I am proud of our club and have enjoyed my association with it and its members - I look forward to the new year ahead. Once again, thank you all.

PS: Remember, an organization succeeds only through the engagement of its members - please consider helping us be the best we can be.

Your President, Thom Scott

Board of Directors Election: At the March meeting the general membership present will elect the Board of Directors for a one-year term. The Board then elects the executive officers. Directors must be willing to make a significant commitment of time to the club. The Board meets monthly or at such times deemed necessary. The Board is responsible for the policies, finances and direction of the Chapter. The Board meetings are open to the entire membership and members are encouraged to attend.

The following members have been selected for your consideration as the next Board of Directors:

President: Tom Scott
 Vice President: Jerry Amyot
 Vice President and speaker chairman: James Lee
 Treasurer: Susan McAveety
 Secretary and Club Photographer: Fred Engelbrecht
 Raffle, Plant Sale inventory and board Nominator: Sally Lee
 Meeting set up and Miscellaneous Inventory manager:
 William Vega
 Newsletter: Denise Provencher
 Web: Andrew Hendrickson
 Also: Mike Sweet, Paul Branesky and Mark Foltarz



Non board members holding jobs:
 Membership and Seed Chairman: Bryon Provencher
 Tasting Table: Cora Coronel, Mary Ann Branesky, and Liz Vega

☞ What's Happening ☜

by Paul Zmoda

Our citrus celebration display was a huge success during the Florida State Fair. " Thank you!" to all RFCI members and friends who helped make it happen. The Club's display looked fantastic and was viewed by thousands of fair goers.

This winter has been quite kind to many of us - cool enough to rack up those important chilling hours necessary for many temperate fruit trees to make flowers - but not cold enough to damage subtropicals either.

Some of us members have noticed that despite citrus greening disease causing decline in our specimens out in open groves, some citrus trees in wooded lots or underneath larger oaks appear healthy, green and productive of normal fruits. We discussed our theories, but these must be tested to determine what is going on. What do you think? Let me know if you have a clue to this puzzle.

I'm still pruning. My Surinam cherries are so big now, it takes three or four sessions to prune each one.



Pictures from the Citrus Celebration and State Fair, and the preparations for these events.



RFCI display at the Fair wins 6th place!



Washing and preparing the fruit.



What a load!



The fruit tasting tables.

∞ The Mayhaw, a new crop for the south ∞



The mayhaw (*Crataegus aestivalis*) is a native fruit tree of the lower southern states (zones 8 and 9). Mayhaws are members of the Rosaceae family. Mayhaws are shrubs or small trees, that are very ornamental in the landscape, with showy flowers, foliage, and clusters of brightly colored fruit. They grow abundantly in their native wetland habitats near streams and swamps, from North Carolina to Florida and west to Texas and Arkansas.

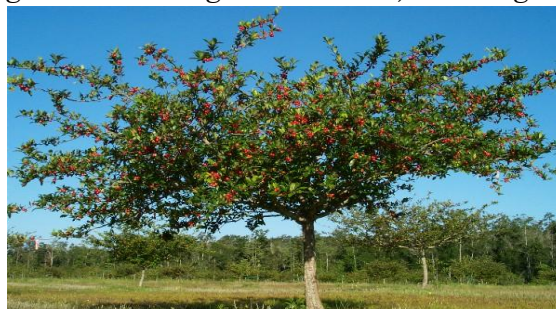
Mayhaws flower profusely and early (late February to mid March in zone 9A), with the fruit ripening in May. The fruit is a pome, yellow to bright red, fragrant, acid, and juicy. For generations, families have trekked into swamps by boat to harvest the fruit with nets. The fruits are boiled in a kettle until they burst open and release their flavor. The flavor is exquisite, sweet apple with overtones of mango and a hint of pineapple. The fruit has been traditionally used by locals for marmalades, butters, preserves, jellies, condiments, syrups, wines, and desserts. The fruit are also enjoyed by wildlife.

The value of this fruit as a crop has been underutilized until recently, as the past ten years has seen more attention by cottage industries as a source of income. The fruit can sell for \$5.00 - \$8.00 per gallon, and the jelly, reported by some to be the best tasting in the world, for \$8.50 per pint. Demand now exceeds supply and many farmers are now showing interest in raising mayhaw as a crop.

To germinate mayhaw seeds, an embryo dormancy (cold period) is required. Seeds need to be kept in a moist medium in a cool location, such as the refrigerator for a period of 2-3 months before germination will occur. Seeds will produce fruiting trees identical to the mother tree, so seeds are an excellent way to grow more of a particularly desirable individual.

Cuttings can also be accomplished. Take softwood cuttings in summer, dip in rooting hormone, and keep well-misted. Grafting can be easily done in late winter when the tree is still dormant. Use whip and tongue, or simple tongue grafts. On larger branches, a cleft graft can be used.

There are quite a number of varieties that have been selected from naturally growing wild specimens. These are hardy in zones 8 and 9, many require low chill hours. Trees are long lived, and produce for a long time. They prefer well-drained, slightly acid soil, but are tolerant of wet, very acid soil. Thanks to Louisiana grower and researcher on



mayhaws, Sherwood Atkins, who is credited with "taking the swamp out of the mayhaw", many varieties will grow and thrive in regular garden soil. These varieties need little fussing, such as spraying, or care. Training and pruning are similar to apples for maintaining best air circulation and fruit production. Two trees are needed for cross pollination.

There is limited information on pest problems of mayhaws, but the same diseases and pests that affect other pome fruits are thought to cause potential problems, especially in a commercial orchard setting.

From: "Mayhaw: A New Fruit Crop for the South", by Jerry A. Payne and Gerard W. Krewer online at <http://www.hort.purdue.edu/newcrop/proceedings1990/v1-317.html>

Sources for trees:

<http://www.justfruitsandexotics.com/Mayhaws.htm>

Tyty Nursery, many varieties, both grafted and ungrafted.

<http://www.tytyga.com>

Mayhaw seeds, plants, products, recipes
http://www.mayhaw.org/LMA_Where_to_Buy.html

Plants, fruiting size trees
www.aaronsfarm.com

Sources for jelly:

For Florida true homemade mayhaw jelly:
 Send letter to Marie's Home Canning, POB 106, White Springs, FL 32096

For Louisiana made mayhaw jelly:
<http://www.simplycajun.com/jamsandjellies.aspx>

For Georgia made mayhaw jelly:
<http://www.localharvest.org/mayhaw-jelly-C5354>

Each year there is a mayhaw festival held somewhere in the south, and this year it is in Arkansas. In 2011, it was in Florida, but it'll be back! This website will keep you informed.
<http://mayhawfestival.com/>



∞ Local Events ∞



3/8/14 9:00 - 10:30am Blueberries and Blackberries. Discover what varieties perform well in the Pasco area, and get planting and care instructions, FREE, Pasco Extension Seminar. Land O' Lakes Community Center, 5401 Land O' Lakes Blvd. US 41, Land O Lakes

3/8/14 8am - 3pm. Spring Obsession All things garden at Munn Park, downtown Lakeland. 863-617-9590 <http://springobsession.org>

3/29/14 10am - 2pm Native Plant Sale, Nature Coast Chapter, Harvester United Methodist Church, 2432 Collier Pkwy, Land O Lakes, 813-991-4812 www.pasconativeplants.org

3/29 - 30 9am - 4pm Greenfest, at Plant Park, Univ. of Tampa, 401 W. Kennedy Blvd., Tampa, www.tampagreenfest.com



For sale: Max Tapener - plant tying device, quickly tapes plants to stakes, wires, etc. Used one season - like new. Comes with extra tape, staples, blades, \$90 value, asking \$60 or BO. Paul 813-677-5985 or Flatwoodsfarm@aol.com

LEASE or SALE: All or part of 65+ acres at NE corner of US 41 & Sunset Lane, Lutz. Some timber, some Cypress, oaks, diversity of vegetation. Many ferns and native plants. Terms negotiable. Call 813/988-1772. Water available. Excellent nursery/growing area. Being sold by a RFCI member.

Notes

Please remember to wear your badge at all meetings! Thank you.

If you have changed your address or email address, don't forget to let us know! We are getting a few returned emailed copies and mailed copies. Please update your information.

Important: Check your Newsletter address label for your membership renewal date. Membership is \$20 per year.



Tampa Bay RFCI
39320 North Ave.
Zephyrhills, FL 33542